

ORDINANCE NO. 25 -2007

**AMENDING THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES CHAPTER 1, PART 5, BY
ADDING A NEW SECTION "N" CITIZENS ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY
BOARD.**

WHEREAS, the City of Reading possesses many beautiful and natural assets that provide economic and social benefits to current and future generations of Reading residents;

WHEREAS, communities are dependent on their natural resources of land, air, and water and therefore responsible for restoring and preserving these invaluable assets; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Reading is committed to active environmental stewardship, as it is the only way to protect the vital natural resources endowed to our community; and

WHEREAS economic activity should serve the common good, be self-renewing, and build local assets and self-reliance whenever possible; and

WHEREAS a sustainable community seeks to enhance and unify these three key community indicia of well-being—social equity, economic self-reliance, and environmental balance—while taking precautions not to compromise the quality of life of future generations; and,

WHEREAS communities throughout the United States have established municipal sustainability Departments, environmental advisory boards or other entities to ensure the long-term local quality of life; and

WHEREAS local and regional sustainable and environmental initiatives will be fostered by the formation of an independent advisory board whose role is to increase awareness in both public and private sectors and to help guide actions to protect and sustain the environment by government, citizens, and businesses; and

WHEREAS, the City of Reading is equally committed to fostering collaboration between the citizenry and government through providing opportunity for volunteers to serve on boards, authorities and commissions.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF READING
hereby ordains as follows:

SECTION 1: Part 5 Boards, Departments, Commissions, Committees and Councils, Chapter 1 Administration and Government of the City of Reading Codified

Ordinances is hereby amended as follows; all other provisions of the City of Reading Codified Ordinances inconsistent herewith are repealed.

**CHAPTER 1 ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNMENT
PART 5 BOARDS, DEPARTMENTS, COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEES AND
COUNCILS
L. ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD**

§ 1-599.41. PURPOSE

The EAB dually organized under these bylaws shall have the power to study environmental and sustainability issues at the request of City Council and make recommendations to Council on those issues. The EAB will work with City Council in an advisory capacity in an effort to help Council analyze environmental and sustainability issues and when appropriate issue recommendations on courses of action necessary to protect the health, safety and welfare of the residents of Berks County.

§ 1-599.42. MEMBERSHIP

- 1) The EAB is composed of seven (7) voting members, chosen to serve three year staggered terms and appointed by City Council. These members shall reflect the geographic, demographic, technical, and non-technical backgrounds of the citizens of Reading.
- 2) Advisory Board members having three or more unexcused absences in a calendar year may be replaced by City Council. Notification of potential dismissal from the Advisory Council will be mailed by the Chair to the board member following a second absence within a calendar year.

§ 1-599.43. MEETINGS AND VOTING

- 1) Monthly meetings. Regular meetings of the EAB will be determined by the membership of the EAB. Notices of a EAB meetings will be posted on the City of Reading website, the Municipal Access Channel and if necessary, a newspaper of general record.
- 2) Special Meetings. Special meetings may be requested by the Chair, or by a majority of the EAB members. Such special meetings shall be held at such place, date and hour as may be designated by the person or persons authorized herein to call such a meeting.
- 3) Written or phone notice of such a special meeting shall be given by the Chair to the Advisory Council members at least five(5) days and not more than twenty-one (21)

days prior to the meeting. City Council and the public shall be notified for such meetings in appropriate manner; i.e. posting the date, time and location on the City website, posting on the municipal access channel, sending a letter to City Council, etc.

- 4) Quorum. In the event a quorum is not present at any meeting, the members may reschedule the meeting for a later date with the required notice. A quorum shall consist of more than 2/3 of the current voting members. The act of the majority of the members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Council.
- 5) Voting. Each member is entitled to one vote, with the voting governed by parliamentary procedure according to Robert's Rules of Order.
- 6) Notes: notes from meetings will be kept and copies of the meeting's notes will be sent to the City Clerks Office and each member of the EAB.
- 7) All meetings or portions of meetings at which action is taken shall be open to the public. However, the EAB may meet in closed session for discussion purposes, pursuant to "The Sunshine Act of 1987."

§ 1-599.44. OFFICERS AND COMPENSATION

- 1) Officers. The EAB shall elect from among their members a Chair and a Vice-Chair at the first meeting of each calendar year. Officers shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected.
- 2) Chair. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Board and shall have the duties and powers normally invested in the Office of Chair. He/she shall enforce the by laws and regulations of the EAB. He/she shall be the official spokesperson for the EAB.
- 3) Vice-Chair. The Vice-Chair shall carry out the Chair's duties in case of absence, incapacity, or resignation.
- 4) Secretary. The Secretary will be responsible for keeping the official minutes of the EAB and preparing all correspondence on behalf of the EAB.
- 5) Compensation. No board member shall receive any salary or payment for his/her services. Financial support of the EAB can be provided by City Council through the authorization of an appropriation to the General Fund Budget.

§ 1-599.45. DUTIES

- 1) To coordinate at the request of Council ongoing, and to propose and promote new environmental protection and sustainability initiatives among residents, businesses, governmental and non-governmental agencies, and educational organizations through education and outreach programs.
- 2) To advise and make recommendations to City Council, City Administration, and City boards, authorities and commissions on policies and programs that infuse the work of City government with an operating philosophy based on environmental protection and sustainability.
- 3) To recommend plans and programs to the appropriate agencies for promotion and conservation of natural resources and for the protection and improvement of the quality of the environment within the City of Reading and surrounding areas.
- 4) Make recommendations as to the possible use of open land areas within the the City of Reading.
- 5) To promote community environmental awareness programs.
- 6) Keep an index of all open areas, publicly or privately owned including but not limited to: flood prone areas, wetlands and other unique natural areas.
- 7) To prepare an annual report to City Council on its activities, goals and accomplishments.
- 8) For each issue that the EAB reviews, it will generate a report to City Council that sets forth its findings and dissenting opinions if any.
- 9) To consult and cooperate with other agencies, departments, boards, authorities and commissions of the City of Reading on environmental matters.

§ 1-599.46. BYLAWS

- 1) The Environmental Advisory Board Bylaws will be drafted and adopted by City Council.
- 2) If at any time the established bylaws are determined to be at conflict with EAB activities or impose too great a set of constraints, the EAB may request City Council amend the bylaws. The request, along with specific recommendations must be submitted to City Council in writing. Upon receiving a request for amendment, City Council will meet with representatives of the EAB to discuss the request. Amendments to the EAB bylaws must be approved by City Council through Resolution.

- 3) City Council reserves the right to amend the bylaws of the EAB through the adoption of subsequent Resolutions.

§ 1-599.47. HEARINGS

- 1) In addition to those required by law, the EAB may hold public hearings when the EAB and City Council decide that such hearings will be in the public interest.
- 2) Except as required by law, notice of the time and place of such hearings, when on matters of widespread interest, shall be published in at least one newspaper of general circulation in the territorial jurisdiction of the hearing, not earlier than two weeks prior to the hearing. For matters of limited territorial interest, notice shall be given in such manner as is deemed appropriate by the EAB.
- 3) The matter before the EAB shall be presented in summary by some person designated by the Chair, and parties in interest shall have privilege of the floor.
- 4) No record or statement shall be recorded or sworn to by the EAB as evidence for any Court of Law without notice to the parties mentioned in the record or statement.
- 5) A record shall be kept of those speaking before the EAB at such hearings.
- 6) Copies of all testimony and other evidence provided at a Public Hearing must be forwarded to the City Clerks Office at the conclusion of the hearing.

§ 1-599.48. INTER MUNICIPAL COOPERATION

- 1) No part of this Ordinance shall prohibit the Reading Environmental Advisory Board from cooperating with similar organizations in other jurisdictions.
- 2) In the interest of efficiency the Reading Environmental Advisory Board may wish to form a joint board with other jurisdictions. Any merger shall be treated as an amendment of this ordinance requiring the approval of City Council.

SECTION 2: Council will appropriate \$500.00, as recommended by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to cover basic operating expenses, which will enable the board to function effectively.

SECTION 3: Effectiveness of Ordinance. This Ordinance will become effective in ten (10) days, in accordance with Charter Section 219.

Enacted April 9, 2007

[Signature]
Council President

Attest:

[Signature]
City Clerk

Submitted to Mayor: [Signature]

Date: 4.10.07

Received by the Mayor's Office: [Signature]

Date: 4.10.07

Approved by Mayor: [Signature]

Date: 4/10/07

Vetoed by Mayor: _____

Date: _____